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THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF A MUSIC TRADITION: HEREDITARY SPECIALISTS IN NORTH INDIA

Daniel M. Neuman

This paper is an exploration of the principles upon which art music in North India is socially organized. It is also an attempt at providing an initial step to the ethnomusicological task that Blacking poses—namely, to look at “the relationship between patterns of human organization and the patterns of sound produced as a result of human interaction” (Blacking, 1973:26,32). My own interest in musical specialists derives from the conviction that they—as mediators between musical sound and the socio-cultural system in which it flourishes—can reveal some of the processes by which a music responds to its more general environment.¹

THE SOCIAL ELEMENTS OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE

In any complete performance of Hindusthani art music, minimally two musical roles must be performed; that of the soloist and that of the accompanist. Individuals who regularly perform one of these roles cannot also perform the other role. Thus, with few exceptions, a soloist cannot also be an accompanist, the converse being true as well.² Soloists and accompanists are themselves each divided into two major kinds. The former is comprised of the categories, vocalist and instrumentalist, and the latter, melodic and rhythmic accompanist. For virtually all performances, any soloist requires a rhythmic specialist—usually a tabla player. In addition, vocalists commonly utilize a melodic accompanist (either a sarangi or harmonium player and sometimes both), to provide heterophonic accompaniment.

These are the basic *social* elements which constitute the performance structure of Hindusthani music. What connects these elements to each other are the relationships binding these kinds of performance roles into a system. The primary relationship defining the system, i.e. which exists between the role of the soloist and that of the accompanist, itself arises out of two phenomena: the structure of music performance and the social organization of music specialists. My intention in this paper is to show how these two phenomena are crucially interlinked and how they both affect and are affected by the changing character of the soloist-accompanist relationship in North Indian art music.³

THE HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE OF MUSIC PERFORMANCE

The musical sounds first heard in a performance (beyond the initial drone of the tanpoura and the tuning of instruments) are generated by the soloist, and only after he or she has begun does the accompanist join in. The pre-eminence of the soloist is maintained throughout the performance with respect to musical decisions. The selection of *rag*, composition, tempo, and rhythmic cycle is determined by the soloist. It is the soloist also who controls the dynamics of accompanying instruments, as well as their intonation, the points and duration of accompanists playing alone and ultimately the beginning and end of the performance. What is left to the accompanist to decide is the particular rhythmic or melodic elaboration during the moments of the performance when he is allowed to play alone. The tabla player is allowed to extemporize through a complete rhythmic cycle or multiples thereof, without being interrupted by the soloist. The melodic accompanist on the other hand is usually allowed only a portion of the rhythmic cycle, and the vocalist can and usually does interrupt him, at which point the accompanist must again provide his heterophonic accompaniment.

Given these characteristics of on-stage musical behavior, it would appear that one principle of Hindusthani musical structure is hierarchy; the accompanist's "humanly organized sound" being subordinate to that of the soloist.

In order to maintain a hierarchical system, there must also be underlying principles of musical specialist recruitment, since the rewards of the super-ordinate rank in a social system would act as a magnet to which all would aspire. Consequently if the soloist/accompanist hierarchy was in itself the basic principle of social organization then we would expect virtually all musicians to become soloists, since the performance of this role is super-ordinate not only with respect to purely musical decisions, but also in terms of honor, respect and remuneration.

One way in which societies organize such a unity of aspirations is to insert an achievement principle. This indeed is roughly how it works in the West. The outstanding performers become soloists, or occupy quasi-soloist roles like the first chair of an instrumental section in the orchestra, and the less exceptional performers, through a system of ranking based on merit and seniority, are spread throughout the rest of the orchestra. If it worked this way in India, then we would find that the best musicians occupy the role of soloist, and the less successful performers become accompanists. Indeed, in individual cases accompanists have moved up to become soloists (although significantly the converse does not occur), a phenomenon I will be examining later in this paper. However, if the system as a whole functioned this way there would appear two further problems.

First, the competence of accompanists as a whole would be lower than that of soloists, since highly accomplished accompanists would have been selected out and transformed into soloists. But the even more crucial problem would be that of specialist training. The decision to become a soloist involves a specialization of skills that has generally little transference from the specialization of an accompanist. In other words, a decision to become a soloist or accompanist and the attendant training required would necessarily precede the moment in a musician's career when one could determine whether or not he is good enough to become a soloist. Except for the case when the melodic accompanist becomes a vocalist, there is little that pre-adapts accompanists for assuming the role of the soloist.⁴

If the reasoning is consistent, there must be then a principle, other than achievement, that leads to the recruitment of musical specialists for different, and in some cases mutually exclusive, musical roles. That is, from the point of view of the *music system*, there must be a means by which the allocation of specialist knowledge is properly organized to fulfill the needs of this hierarchical music system. The way in which this has been accomplished in North India is consonant with the social organization of Indian society generally—namely, a system of social recruitment on an ascriptive basis. Thus, individuals become soloists or accompanists because they have been recruited from groups which traditionally have generated one or the other. In the following section the social organization of musical specialists, with particular reference to the hierarchical and ascriptive principles involved, will be examined in more detail.

THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS OF MUSICAL SPECIALISTS

As the sub-heading suggests, there is not one, but a number of social organizations of musicians. Until the middle of this century, the vast majority of soloists, and as far as I can determine, all accompanists were recruited from families of hereditary musical specialists. The entrance of non-hereditary musicians into the Hindusthani music system has had important consequences which will be examined below. For the present I will confine my discussion to the organization of hereditary families of musicians since they still provide the main pool of specialist knowledge and currently provide a comparative basis for more recent developments.

Families of hereditary musicians are divided along a number of lines, the most important of which, however, is the division into soloist and accompanist families, or more properly speaking, lineages. Thus, the role of either soloist or accompanist is passed on from father to son⁵ and the autonomy of lineage specialization is maintained by the virtual absence of intermarriage between members of soloist and accompanist lineages. Indeed, the organiza-

tional elaboration of this lineage principle occurs in quite distinct ways between soloists and accompanists.

One major difference between soloists and accompanists is that the lineage of soloists tend to be specialty specific, this not being the case at all among accompanist lineages. For example, vocalists are typically recruited from vocalist families, and instrumentalists from their respective families. This becomes in some cases even more specialized, in that there are certain well known lineages of *bin*, *sitar*, and *sarod* specialists.⁶

The social organizations of soloists are themselves differentiated along vocal and instrumental specialties. Instrumental soloists are members of lineages that are fairly small (with respect to the number of members at any given point) and have a diversity of origins. Thus, when discussing instrumental lineages, one usually is, in effect, describing lineage histories, and there are few generalities one can state about instrumental lineages as a whole. Perhaps the only significant generality that can properly be made is that most solo instrumentalists trace their ancestry (either through blood, usually via disciple connections) back to the great Tansen, chief court musician of the great Mughal emperor Akbar (1565-1605).

Vocal lineages, on the other hand, are more closely connected to each other, yet they are themselves distinguished into two major categories. There are, first of all, lineages whose members claim to have been exclusively solo specialists in their ancestry. Such musicians refer to themselves as *Kalawants*⁷ to distinguish themselves from lineages of vocalists which have not been exclusively solo specialists in the past.

The Kalawants form an endogamous social unit. As far as I have been able to determine, there are about fifteen such lineages. The members of the lineages are all Muslim and are consequently (in contrast to Hindus) allowed to marry cousins of all varieties, a preferred form which is frequently expressed verbally and in marriage. Members are not allowed to marry into non-Kalawant groups and, in this sense, form a specialized caste. Another important feature of their social organization is that the eldest direct male descendant of the lineage's founding member is the *khalifa* (*cf.*, Caliph) of that lineage. The *khalifa* is, in effect, the reigning authority on musical matters. It is he who will be the final arbiter concerning any question about the musical tradition that his family represents. Such a musical tradition associated with a lineage of vocalists is known as a *gharana* (literally, "of the House"), and each lineage among Kalawants forms the core of a separate *gharana*. However, the *gharana* as a social unit goes beyond the lineage responsible for its existence, since non-hereditary musicians claim membership in a *gharana* if they have been a disciple of a member.

Those vocal lineages which are not exclusively soloist in ancestry, (and certain instrumental lineages as well) have their origins in accompanist musical

families. Although there are several kinds of accompanist musical families,⁸ by far the most important in numbers and influence are those collectively referred to as *Mirasis*.

Mirasis were (and some still are) rural musicians whose specialty, aside from providing musical entertainment at major celebrations, was the maintaining of genealogies for their clients. Their urban counterparts who have entered the classical tradition (most probably within the last century or so)⁹ provide the vast majority of sarangi and tabla players in North India.¹⁰

Mirasi accompanists are also organized along patrilineages—that is, the *khandans*—but whereas the lineage is the largest functioning social unit among the pure soloist groups, among Mirasis the largest functioning group is the *biradari*—that is, the brotherhood. Membership in a brotherhood is territorially defined. Thus, the Delhi brotherhood includes a number of lineages, all the members of which trace their ancestral origins to Delhi. Similarly, the members of lineages who trace their ancestral home to Moradabad constitute the Moradabad *biradari*, and so forth.

Mirasi accompanists, like solo Kalawants, are all Muslims. They state a preference for marriage within the lineage or extended family, and indeed many marriages take place between close relatives. Marriage, however, is fairly common between members of different brotherhoods and seems to be in large part a function of propinquity.

Each brotherhood has a caste council—a *panchayat*—and a head, called the *choudhury*, both institutions being common to occupational castes in India. The *choudhury*, as leader of the brotherhood, in contrast to the leader of the soloist lineages, the *khalifa*, is not expected to be necessarily competent as a musician. Rather, his status, which is also inherited, demands a wise and impartial adjudicator of conflicts within the brotherhood. For example, questions of marital problems between individuals are often brought before the council and the *choudhury*, who is its leader.

The brotherhood is also the focus of its members' primary extra-familial loyalty. For example, all members are invited to life cycle ceremonies, and if help is needed, one will tend to go to others within the brotherhood. If a musician is the son of parents from two different *biradari*, he will have ties to both, although, all things being equal, his primary tie will be to his father's *biradari*.

The differences between Kalawant soloists and Mirasi accompanists can now be summarized as follows. Kalawants and Mirasis are both social categories of musical specialists, *not* social groups.¹¹ The category of Kalawant, however, is composed of potential or actual intermarrying lineages, whereas the category of Mirasis is constituted by potential or actually intermarrying brotherhoods which are themselves comprised of intermarrying lineages. The lineages of Kalawants have as a leader the *khalifa*, a role

concerned purely with musical matters. The brotherhoods of Mirasis, on the other hand, are headed by the choudhury, concerned only with social matters within the biradari.

More generally, soloist lineages generate particular specialists like vocalists, sarodists, and so forth. Accompanist lineages, however, generate both major types of accompanists, sarangi and tabla players. Thus, in the latter case what a son inherits from his father is the role of accompanist, and the decision to become specifically a tabla player or sarangi player is not ascribed. Consequently, one often finds brothers, one of whom plays the sarangi while the other performs on the tabla.

The difference between the social organization of soloists and accompanists is expressed in their different social ranks as well. The hierarchical arrangement between soloist and accompanist on-stage which I have already described, is reflected—and I would argue, reinforced—by the higher rank of soloists offstage. This higher rank is due, in the case of hereditary musicians, to the depth of their pedigrees, ranging between five and ten generations,¹² and in some cases the purity of their pedigrees, i.e. the absence of any accompanists in their ancestry. To the extent that offstage behavior occurs at all in interactions between soloists and accompanists (and by far much of this behavior is backstage) the differences in rank are exhibited, for example by the soloist requesting services of the accompanist, or the soloist walking onstage first, or perhaps more concretely, the differences in the remuneration they receive, which can reach a factor of ten in particular cases.

The accompanists' subordinate role is reinforced by a major negative attribute, which is their association with dancing and singing girls as accompanists, an attribute that was stigmatic and served to separate respectable from non-respectable musicians in the middle nineteenth century as well (Imam, 1959:13-26). Furthermore, there is no attempt on the part of accompanists to demonstrate a "pure" accompanist ancestry. On the contrary, accompanists will sometimes argue that in the past they were originally soloists (Neuman, 1977).

The distinction between soloists and accompanists, as reflected in these social organizational differences, yields the respective conceptual distinctions obtaining between that of the artist and the artisan.

The soloist is the artist. He is primarily responsible for the total musical performance—as I have indicated, everything from the initial tuning and choice of particular composition to the overall shape, progression, and duration of it. The performance, in short, is an expression of the soloist's creative powers and his particular style.

The accompanist is an artisan. He fills in some of the spaces and provides some of the embellishment, always however within the musical framework which the soloist defines and provides. Most significant, however,

is that the accompanist performs a role which is interchangeable with other individuals. If one sarangi or tabla player is not available, another can provide the basic musical services as well. That is, beyond a basic level of competence, the personality, the individual expression of the accompanist, and the creativity of his imagination are not *crucial* for the performance structure as a whole. This is not to say that there is no room for personal expression on the part of the accompanist. There is, and it is often manifest as an important contribution to the *success* of a given performance. It is not, however, a fundamental requirement of a performance. Thus, a tabla player can dazzle the audience with his playing, but numerous soloists prefer that a tabla player provide merely the rhythmic structure (*theke*) of a particular cycle.

What the fundamental role distinction between soloist and accompanist implies, in addition, is that accompanist lineages do not generate stylistic schools (*gharanas*), since accompanists do not, in theory, perform in a particular style. This is a controversial assertion, since accompanists do in fact claim that they belong to *gharanas*. Certain sarangi players claim, along with solo instrumentalists, to belong to the Seniya Gharana. Tabla players for their part perform in a number of styles, which are called *baj*. Furthermore, tabla players have solo repertoires, perform solo onstage, and should therefore, as more than one eminent tabla player has argued, be considered soloists as well.

Nevertheless, soloists and connoisseurs whom I have encountered do not speak of style at all when discussing sarangi players and use the term *baj* when discussing tabla styles, not *gharanas*. The tabla's role as a solo instrument seems to be recent as a general phenomenon. According to Stewart the development of a solo repertoire is an early twentieth-century phenomenon, and my own evidence, based on interviews with older tabla players, is that the common public presentation of solo tabla playing is very recent, perhaps within the last quarter century (Stewart, 1974:162). What is significant about these disparate views is their very disparateness, because it constitutes a datum for some of the changes that Indian music is in the process of undergoing.

CHANGES

What I have described are the essential features of the traditional social organization of art musicians in North India. Yet, as a system of social organization, it has never been as static as such a description would seem to imply. A fundamental motive for the dynamics of this system has been the attempt of accompanists to become soloists. This has usually occurred through a process not unlike Sanskritization (*cf.*, Srinivas, 1967:1-45), in which accompanists have assumed the attributes of soloists.

A revealing instance of this is the history of the Delhi Gharana of

Mamman Khan. Mamman Khan, who died in 1940, was a famous sarangi player. He had four sons, all of whom became vocalists, and all of their sons are now soloists married to either their first or second cousins. By practising close relative marriage, this lineage has tended to separate itself from other lineages, and members now claim it to be a gharana. There is some evidence that lineage separation and solo specialization is a strategy that has been used for the formation of stylistic schools in the past. This gharana not only specializes exclusively in solo performance, but it claims an extended pedigree that goes back to the eighth century A.D. In addition, members provide an explanation for accompanists in their recent ancestry as an aberration and imply pure soloist ancestry in their further past.¹³

If sarangi players, because of their experience as melodic accompanists, can become solo vocalists and instrumentalists, this is clearly not an option open to tabla players, since they, as rhythmic specialists, are not pre-adapted to becoming vocalists or other kinds of soloists. Their strategy, therefore, has been to make tabla playing itself a solo musical phenomenon. Their use of the term gharana is part of a general practice of all musicians to reaffirm *or* create a socio-musical identity. Among tabla players, the use of the term "gharana" is probably a very recent phenomenon, perhaps becoming current only in the last decade. In my own conversations with tabla players in 1969-71, the term gharana was rarely used and then only as a synonym for *baj*, not as a synonym for the lineage (*khandan*) as vocalists use it.¹⁴

Identifying with a gharana appears to be increasingly less a function of intimate relationships, either as kin or disciples, but more a way to manipulate those proper symbolic identities most successful in furthering a career. One sees now, for example, a complete pedigree of a performer included in a concert program. The connoisseurs shudder, but now "anyone and everyone" has a gharana. Thus, not only do tabla players have gharanas, but gharanas are named after famous musicians like Allaudin Khan and Ravi Shankar. This is not mere name-dropping, but the need for performers to make clear to an ever expanding heterogeneous and uninformed public who they are and how they are to be distinguished. This shift of the connotation of gharana away from a lineage interpretation to a purely musical identity reflects the increasingly non-hereditary mode of recruitment of musical specialists.

Since Independence (1947) especially, non-hereditary musicians have become important as musical specialists, both in terms of numbers and individual prestige. The entrance of these musicians into an occupational specialty of hereditary groups was in part caused by the vacuum created by the exodus of Muslim hereditary musicians after Partition. Important as well was the social respectability that the profession of music had begun to achieve. Ravi Shankar is the pre-eminent symbol of this transition, being a Hindu non-hereditary musician married into a Muslim hereditary musician family.

The situation as it is found today is that many younger soloists are non-hereditary musicians, whereas most accompanists still are being recruited from hereditary backgrounds. In terms of the structural prerequisites of the music system I have outlined above, this would seem to be a source of instability in the hierarchical arrangements found on the stage. This is so because non-hereditary musicians are recruited from a variety of backgrounds which only rarely can be considered equal or superior in *musical terms* to hereditary accompanists because the latter can and do claim that music "is in their blood" and they have been doing it for generations. However, as with hereditary soloists, the social background of non-hereditary soloists is with very few exceptions quite high. Thus, most non-hereditary soloists in North India come from Bengal and Maharashtra, and the vast majority of them are Brahmans.¹⁵

The discontinuity between off-stage and on-stage hierarchies results in tensions within the context of musical performances. Non-hereditary soloists attempt to maintain the traditional hierarchy and seek accompanists whom they can "keep in control." Accompanists, as with all hereditary music specialists, view themselves as complete professionals by virtue of inheritance and experience, and accord this "complete professional" status only to luminaries among non-hereditary musicians such as Ravi Shankar. This ambivalence of musical status, as perceived by the accompanist is one of the reasons that accompanists are able increasingly to define their own musical role as part of a duet. This is particularly true of the tabla player whose musical role has generally become more important during the last several decades.

The tabla player's increased importance in the last few decades is a topic often discussed by connoisseurs, and most attribute this rise in status to Allaudin Khan and his major disciples, Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan. Perhaps first because of foreign audiences, but certainly now for Indian audiences as well, tabla solos within a performance, as well as separate tabla solo performances, are seen as increasingly important for the overall success of a concert. Tabla virtuosos often receive as much or more applause than the soloist.¹⁶ This change in the musical importance of the tabla is most explicitly demonstrated in the fee structure of foreign tours. In 1969-1970 and earlier, it was common for a soloist to choose his own tabla player, take him abroad for a foreign tour, and essentially pay him expenses and some pocket money, and perhaps a little bonus at the end of the tour. Only three years later good tabla players were demanding, and getting, twenty-five percent of the soloist's fees and all expenses. What some tabla players learned on previous tours was that, from the point of view of foreign audiences, they were perceived as part of a duet.¹⁷ This is an interpretation that some of the better tabla players attempt to create in India as well. They achieve this by performing onstage as if they were part of a duet and by refusing to perform

the services for soloists offstage that in the past reaffirmed their subordinate status.

The rise of the importance of the tabla player during the last several decades perhaps explains why in Bengal there is already a first generation of tabla players who have not been recruited from hereditary families of accompanists, but rather have been recruited from upper caste backgrounds. This is certainly a recruitment based on an achievement principle. In this connection, it is significant that to my knowledge not a single sarangi player has been so recruited. That is, every professional sarangi player has hitherto been recruited from hereditary families, and there is no evidence that this will change in the future.

Space does not permit a detailed examination of the institutional dynamics of the musical world today, but certainly with the patronage of All India Radio, the musical conference network, and the proliferation of music education at all levels, there are a host of novel opportunities and strategies for all musicians. A result of the new and wider musical niche, however, is that the traditional social values concerning musical specialists have changed in significance. For example, because of the inter-changeability of their musical roles, accompanists are in demand *as* accompanists and hold full-time staff positions at All India Radio. Regularly employed solo instrumentalists in contrast find a performing position only in the radio orchestras and ensembles, musical media that are manifestly not part of the soloist's tradition. For their part, vocalists are even further separated from their specialty at All India Radio. There they can only earn a living as music producers (an administrative post), composers (of light music genres), or as tanpoura players.

CONCLUSION

Thus, it is clear that families of hereditary musicians of all varieties and families of non-hereditary musicians both provide a pool from which the musicians of tomorrow are being recruited. For tabla players, at least excellent ones, it suggests their power to demand an increasing part of the total performance as well as a relatively greater remuneration. Sarangi players of repute also feel that they should have a more important role in performance, but if they become too demanding they can always be dismissed, which indeed happens.

Viewed as a total system, Hindusthani music is undergoing a profound change in direction which causes and is caused in part by the changing recruitment procedures. Such a procedure, if it eventually becomes completely oriented toward achievement will result in a much closer equivalence of role stature and the diminution of the soloist/accompanist hierarchy. One possi-

bility is that, for tabla players at least, excellent performers will be recruited as duet type specialists, and those considered not so good will retain the more traditional accompanist role.¹⁸

All of this suggests that a study of the social organization of musical specialists illuminates the social and cultural environments that affect this organization and the "patterns of sound" which are part of the response musicians make. The shift in the hierarchical and ascriptive mode of recruitment, in the use of socio-musical identities, and in the status and roles of performers adumbrates, at the least, the general directions of music changes. Thus, the possibility of explaining in social and cultural terms the dynamics of a music system becomes the more evident.

NOTES

1. This is a revised form of a paper delivered at the annual meetings of the Society for Ethnomusicology held in San Francisco, 1974. The research for this paper was supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health, the Department of Anthropology at the University of Illinois and Dartmouth College.

2. The exceptions are when a tabla player is performing solo (discussed later in the paper) and when an instrumentalist accompanies the tabla solo with a *lahra*, which is basically a composition repeatedly performed and set within the rhythmic cycle.

3. It should be stressed that there are three separate phenomena being considered here. The structure of music sound; the social structure of individuals in performance; and the social organization of musical specialists which provides the pool from which performers are recruited.

4. The years of training required to produce a competent tabla player (the rhythmic accompanist) would include very few skills which could be utilized to effect the transformation into a soloist. This is, to be sure, not so clearly the case with the sarangi or harmonium player (the melodic accompanist) since during the training period, the melodic accompanist receives vocal lessons and has the experience of heterophonic accompaniment, thereby acquiring the knowledge necessary to attempt to become a soloist. This knowledge is utilized by sarangi players to either become vocalists or teach their sons vocal music exclusively, but few sarangi players can expect to actually become soloists. The sarangi like the tabla is not considered a solo instrument, but it is occasionally used as such. Only one sarangi player in India performs the sarangi as a solo instrument exclusively, and this is a phenomenon of the last few years. The implications of these comments are discussed in more detail in the latter part of this paper.

5. Although I have not discussed them in this paper, there are a few notable lineages of female musicians, all vocalists, who pass on this specialty from mother to daughter.

6. One will of course find individuals who do not conform to this pattern, and thus specialize in something other than the specialty of his lineage. For example, in the genealogy of the lineage of Agra vocalists one finds, I believe, two instrumentalists while the approximately remaining fifty are vocalists. The sitar lineage of Vilayat Khan now includes five generations of sitar specialists. The equally important sarod lineage of Hafiz Ali Khan includes only sarodists, I believe without exception. My own data are not available at the time of writing this note, which prevents a more precise enumeration, but the overall pattern is clear. Among hereditary soloists lineages are identified with, and with few exceptions generate particular solo specialists. I should add that the specialization of these lineages include musical styles and to a certain extent repertoires, although these are secondary considerations to the main point being made here.

7. According to Imam (1959:14-15), Kalawants are technically descendants of four great musicians in the court of Akbar (1565-1605). The term, however, is not used in such a limited fashion now, and as Imam indicates, it was not so used in the middle of the nineteenth century either.

8. The other important accompanists are the *Kathak* caste of sarangi and tabla players centered in Benares. For more on different accompanist groups see Neuman 1974:151-53.

9. This is discussed in detail in Neuman, 1977.

10. The other important types are the aforementioned *Kathak* of Benares, and a group of younger tabla players from Bengal.

11. The importance of distinguishing social categories from social groups is that the former does not imply that members are in active participation with each other *qua* members, whereas in the latter case this is implied. Thus, all *Mirasis* never form a group and participate together in social behavior as *Mirasis*. They do, however, participate as members of a brotherhood. It is in this sense that the brotherhood is considered a group, whereas the term *Mirasi* is more accurately a social category.

12. As I discuss in my article (Neuman 1977), *gharanas* as such are a phenomenon of the last one hundred years or so, but lineages which form the core of these *gharanas* extend back in time beyond the founding of the *gharana*.

13. Neuman 1977.

14. Writing this note in India at the end of 1976, I should say that in my most recent discussions with tabla players the term *gharana* is used now quite commonly, but this is only an impression.

15. Many Bengali vocalists belonged to the Vishnupur *Gharana* which was almost exclusively Brahman. Maharashtrian vocalists were almost all members of the Gwalior *Gharana*, and were, I think without exception all Brahmans. I should add that the Bengali and Maharashtrian vocal traditions have not been explicitly considered in this paper although they form an important part of the Hindusthani musical tradition. Nevertheless the fact that the overwhelming majority of these performers were or are Brahmans, supports the claim being made here that soloists were recruited from separate, high status groups, when compared to accompanists.

16. It may be mistaken however to use an "applause meter" logic here. Top tabla virtuosos do constantly get more applause during a concert than do their respective solo virtuosos. It may be that the applause at the end of the concert is somehow reserved for the soloist.

17. In some cases I have seen Western audiences treat the tanpoura player as part of a trio. In India, of course, the tanpoura player is usually a disciple of the soloist, and since providing the drone through the tanpoura requires very little competence (it takes twenty-eight minutes to learn, as one soloist put it), tanpoura players are virtual non-performers and are consequently ignored by the audience.

18. Something like this is perhaps already occurring. There are a few tabla players who are regularly recruited for their great virtuosity as accompanists to instrumental soloists. In vocal recitals there is much less scope for solo tabla playing, and I believe there is consequently a tendency by vocalists to recruit tabla players who do not specialize as much in electrifying virtuoso display. For sarangi players the situation is less clear since as accompanists they are dispensable. The use of melodic accompanists being an option of the vocalist, turns the question towards whether or not they will be utilized as accompanists. Conceivably there could emerge a tradition of solo sarangi playing, although I do not believe this will happen.

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